

ATHENS CARDIOLOGY UPDATE 2008

The Nurse's Role in Patients Supported with an Intra-Aortic Balloon Pump

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Aim: The purpose of this investigation was to collect data on the appropriate nursing care to patients supported with an intra-aortic balloon pump (IABP).

Patients: All 39 patients who were supported with an IABP during the year 2006 (23 men – 16 women) took part in this investigation. They received nursing and medical care in the Intensive Care Cardiovascular Unit (ICCU) of Evangelismos General Hospital of Athens.

Methods: The 'observation protocol' which was employed consisted of:

- a. Patient's personal information.
- b. Patient's special disease conditions and exams (X-rays, coronary angiography, echocardiograms).
- c. Timing ischemia duration (during the extracorporeal circulation –ECC- in surgical cases), the indications of IABP and the way of technical introduction.
- d. The anticoagulant treatment.
- e. The conditions of IABP function
- f. The complications conferred by the IABP.

Results: Patients who were supported with IABP were 39, 23 men and 16 women. Three patients died in the operating room and 7 died in the ICCU. The majority (74%) survived and were weaned off the IABP successfully, all thanks to both medical and nursing care.

Conclusion:

1. Patients who are supported with an IABP are at high risk to suffer fatal complications.
2. It is imperative that the urgent cases should be evaluated at the proper time and be given immediate medical treatment.
3. Registered nurses ought to be in constant vigilance in order to appreciate and prevent the complications in a timely fashion.
4. Prevention of possible complications is better than managing them.